



## Loudoun County, Virginia

[www.loudoun.gov/Ashburn](http://www.loudoun.gov/Ashburn)

Supervisor Ralph Buona

1 Harrison Street, S.E., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Leesburg, VA 20175

Telephone 703/777-0205 • email: [ralph.buona@loudoun.gov](mailto:ralph.buona@loudoun.gov) • [www.facebook.com/RalphForLoudoun](https://www.facebook.com/RalphForLoudoun)

Dear Ashburn District Friends and Neighbors,

Loudoun County is undoubtedly one of the best places in the country to live. We are blessed with a robust economy, community-focused citizens, a variety of housing types, beautiful landscapes, access to D.C., great schools, and vast recreational amenities. We are a vibrant, world-class community. To maintain that standing, we must continue to foster an atmosphere that keeps Loudoun innovative and desirable.

Since being elected in November 2011, I have been honored to serve the Ashburn District and have worked hard to make significant progress on the commitments I've made to you. I want to update you on my efforts since taking office, highlighting Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014).

### ***IMPROVING ROADS & REDUCING CONGESTION***

Of all of the accomplishments this Board has achieved, I am the most pleased with the number of strategic transportation improvements we have initiated. ***“Fixing our transportation network”*** was the No. 1 issue brought to my attention while campaigning and remains the top issue I hear about today. We realized additional funding sources were needed in order to begin addressing this problem in earnest – thus we pushed for passage of HB2313, reduced our reliance on proffers, and dedicated two cents of the real property tax rate to raise the needed funds.

***Working to Get You Home Earlier  
by Funding \$737 Million in the  
6-year CIP for Strategic  
Transportation Projects.***

**Capital Investment:** In FY15, \$126.5 million is dedicated to rail and road projects, and \$121 million to school projects – this is a significantly different funding mix than in past years. Additionally, the approved six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes \$737 million on rail and road projects and \$651 million on school projects.

Revenue associated with HB2313 accounts for 42% of all revenue sources for road projects, and 16% of all capital projects in the proposed CIP.

**Gloucester Parkway:** One of the most important projects in this term is the acceleration of the extension of Gloucester Parkway from Loudoun County Parkway to the intersection of Pacific Boulevard and Nokes Boulevard. This 0.8 mile segment, including a bridge over the Broad Run, completes an additional east-west roadway to significantly reduce congestion on Waxpool Road and Route 7. Studies indicate this improvement will remove 10,000 cars from Route 7 and 7,500 cars from Waxpool Road each day. Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall and the project bid came in substantially under the original estimate.

**Route 7 Interchanges:** We are moving closer to the day when **Route 7 will be limited access** (signal free) from Countryside to Battlefield Parkway in Leesburg. Design, engineering and right-of-way acquisition is currently underway at both Ashburn Village Boulevard and Belmont Ridge Road. Construction is projected to begin later this fall.

**Waxpool Road - Faulkner Road & Unbridled Way:** Construction is underway to widen Waxpool Road to four lanes between Faulkner Road and Unbridled Way (adjacent to the Verizon campus). A

traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Waxpool Road and Ashburn Village Boulevard and should be operational by September. The entire project will be complete in spring 2015.

**Waxpool Road & Pacific Boulevard:** The focus of these traffic flow improvements is to remedy the backup when leaving the Wegmans shopping center. The intersections of Loudoun County Parkway, Broderick Drive and Pacific Boulevard will be improved, with construction beginning in early 2016.

**Belmont Ridge Road:** Belmont Ridge Road Improvements from Route 7 to Northstar Boulevard are a combination of 8 projects either completed or to be constructed by developers, Loudoun County, or VDOT. The overall plan is to provide a 4-lane roadway with turn lanes and trails or a trail and sidewalk on each side of the roadway with the W&OD Trail elevated over Belmont Ridge Road. One of the most critical segments is Gloucester Parkway to Hay Road. This project is funded by the county in the amount of \$55-\$60 million, but VDOT is administering it in conjunction with the interchange project. Estimated completion date is 2016-2017.

**Farmwell Road Widening:** The project to widen Farmwell Road to six lanes between Ashburn Road and Smith Switch Road is funded in the amount of \$7 million in FY16 by the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance.

**Russell Branch Parkway:** Design and engineering work is complete for the connection between Ashburn Village Boulevard and Ashburn Road. Once right-of-way is acquired, construction will begin.

**Sidewalks in Old Ashburn:** Sidewalks are a critical component of our transportation network. Just as we have many road “missing links,” we have bicycle and pedestrian missing links. Last year, I addressed the W&OD Trail crossing at Belmont Ridge Road and I am now tackling a decades old problem – the lack of safe, complete, and usable sidewalks in “Old Ashburn.”

Shortly after taking office, I reviewed the dated preliminary study estimating the cost to replace sidewalks along the western side of Ashburn Road between the W&OD Trail (near Hay Road) and Partlow Road to be approximately \$640,000. I secured the needed funding to revive the stalled project. A 2013 site visit revealed many underground and overhead utilities would need to be relocated, thus driving the estimated project cost to more than \$2 million. I directed staff to investigate constructing the sidewalk on the eastern side of Ashburn Road. Preliminary findings show this option is viable and will save close to \$1 million. Thirty percent design plans will be complete in September. A public input session will be held prior to moving to 60% design.

**Dulles Metrorail:** 3 July, 2012, will live on as a defining moment in Loudoun’s history as the date the Board voted 5-4 to bring Metrorail to Loudoun County. Phase I of the project, East Falls Church to Wiehle Avenue, will open on 26 July this year. Phase II, comprised of six stations and beginning at Wiehle Avenue and ending at Route 772 in Ashburn, is already under construction. Three of the six stations will be in Loudoun. Heavy construction of the aerial guideway and station at Dulles International Airport will begin in July 2014. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority has officially set the target date for **Phase II service to begin in late December 2018.**

## ***PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES***

**Academies of Loudoun (AOL):** Since my tenure as the Chairman of the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce’s Board of Directors, I have been committed to enhancing Science, Technology, Engineering and Math educational opportunities in Loudoun. Working closely with the other members of the Board of Supervisors/School Board Joint Committee and its Citizen’s

Volunteer Workgroup, we ensured that AOL remained in the six-year CIP in the amount of \$108,580,000. The county already owns the site for this campus which is off of Sycolin Road west of Goose Creek. Design funds will be granted this fall and construction should be complete in 2018. While the curriculum is in the early planning phases, I could not be more excited about the leading-edge vision for this campus that is emerging.

**Broad Run High School Renovation & Expansion:**

After visiting Broad Run High School (BRHS) this winter, it was immediately clear that improvements and renovations were long overdue. I was shocked by the condition of the facility and saddened to know so many children are being taught in these conditions. Supervisor Shawn Williams (Broad Run) joined me in leading the effort to secure funding for an unplanned \$26.5 million project to design and construct a ten-classroom addition, expand the cafeteria, add two resource spaces, a health room, and upgrade the stadium, including an artificial turf field and other improvements. The renovation and expansion will increase student capacity from 1,468 to 1,600, eliminating the need for trailers. By taking this action, we accelerated the improvements by as much as 10 years.

***Expanding & Renovating Broad Run High School 10 Years Early With a \$26.5 Million Investment.***

**Stone Bridge High School Artificial Turf Field:** On 18 June, I initiated an item to engage in a Public-Private Partnership with the Stone Bridge High School Booster Club to fund an artificial turf field at Stone Bridge. The booster club will contribute \$250,000 to the project and the county will fund up to \$750,000. ***This motion passed unanimously.*** I believe this is a model the county should examine for the remaining five high schools without plans for an artificial turf field.

**Welcome to the Trailside Middle School Wolves:** The Ashburn District will see the opening of its final middle school this fall, located off of Claiborne Parkway. The final high school for our cluster, Riverside, will open in fall 2015.

***CREATING JOBS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY***

Economic development in its purest form means retaining existing businesses and recruiting new ones. This ensures there are jobs in the county for our residents and increases the commercial share of our tax base, which in turn reduces the residential share of the tax burden. And businesses consume far fewer services than residents. I am thrilled to report this Board's investment in economic development is paying off! The information below reflects events in 2013 unless otherwise noted:

- The unemployment rate remains considerably lower than the national and state averages with a yearly average of 4.2 percent.
- Loudoun employment grew 4 percent, representing 5,200 net new jobs.
- There was a 5 percent increase in wages paid by Loudoun businesses.
- New construction was permitted in all nonresidential categories, including over 1 million square feet of data center space. The data center industry alone is generating more than \$60 million in revenues for the county annually. In total, 1.9 million square feet of commercial space was permitted.
- Nearly \$209 million in investment was made by businesses coming to or expanding in Loudoun.
- There have been 29 “wins” so far this FY14, including the attraction or retention of: Cannon Technologies, Telos, Department of the Interior's Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Children's Science Center, CyrusOne, and Equinix.

***Bringing STEM Opportunities to  
Loudoun's Children –  
The Children's Science Center and the  
Academies of Loudoun.***

**Children's Science Center (CSC):** As mentioned above, STEM educational opportunities are critical as we educate our children to be tomorrow's workforce. More than 50 percent of the new jobs in our region in the next decade will require STEM skills. For these reasons, I worked with the CSC Board for more than

a year to ensure Loudoun was chosen as their future home. CSC will locate its 53,000-square-foot world-class children's science center in the Kincora development and will focus its courses on children ages 2-12. This will be Northern Virginia's first children's science museum.

## ***IMPLEMENTING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT***

**FY15 Budget:** As Chairman of the Board's Finance, Government Services, and Operations Committee, I continue to work hard to lead the county to "improve our balance sheet" by exploring every option for reducing costs. In April, the Board adopted a \$1.98 billion fiscal plan for general county government and the school system. The budget includes \$922 million for the schools and \$438 million for general county government operations. To fund this budget, the real property tax rate was set at \$1.155 per \$100 in assessed value, which will result in ON AVERAGE a flat tax bill for homeowners when compared to last year.

**LCPS Budget:** The FY15 adopted budget includes one of the largest year-over-year dollar increases for Loudoun County Public Schools at \$69 million. This is an 8% increase over last year. School enrollment growth was approximately 3%. While this was less than the School Board requested, it funds 96% of their request.

**Aaa Bond Rating:** Our bond rating directly correlates to the interest rate at which bonds will be issued, so we obviously work hard to keep it as high as possible. Before each bond issuance, Board Chairman Scott York, financial staff, and I meet with each of the three major rating agencies. This year, all three—Moody's, S&P, and Fitch—sent analysts to Loudoun for a briefing and a tour. They were not disappointed! We received "Aaa" ratings from all three agencies and very positive feedback. Moody's noted *"...Loudoun's sizable and diverse tax base with strong long-term growth potential, above-average wealth levels, consistently solid financial performance..."* as well as *"...a manageable debt burden and solid reserve levels and strong financial management."*

As always, if you have feedback, questions or suggestions for areas of focus, please contact me. Great communities require citizens and elected officials working together to keep them great. For more frequent updates, sign up for my email newsletter and 'like' my Facebook page at [www.loudoun.gov/Ashburn](http://www.loudoun.gov/Ashburn), email me at [ralph.buona@loudoun.gov](mailto:ralph.buona@loudoun.gov) or call my office at 703-777-0205.

Kind regards,



Ralph M. Buona  
Ashburn District Supervisor